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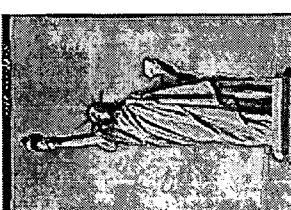
ABSTRACT

The Statue of Liberty, which stands in Upper New York Bay, is a universal symbol of freedom. A gift from France, it originally was conceived as an emblem of the friendship between the people of France and the United States. It has become much more, symbolizing the Mother of Exiles, greeting the millions of immigrants and embodying hope and opportunity for those seeking a better life in America. It represents the United States itself. This lesson aims to help clarify the nature of symbols for students as they study the Statue of Liberty, complete research on a national symbol, and use their research to communicate a message of their own. The lesson plan contains material on how to prepare to teach the lesson, including notes to the teacher and guiding questions. It also contains suggested activities for the following lessons: Lesson 1: Isn't It Symbolic?; Lesson 2: A Mighty Woman with a Torch; Lesson 3: Built-In Symbols; Lesson 4: Using the Symbol; Lesson 5: Choose a Symbol, Any Symbol; Lesson 6: Create a Symbol; Lesson 7: The United States Symbol; and Extending the Lesson. The lesson plan provides detailed information and ideas for teaching each lesson; cites learning objectives; gives appropriate grade levels (Grades 3-5) and time required for each lesson; and outlines national standards for English/language arts, social studies, arts, and civics and government. Lists several helpful Web sites and other resources. (NKA)

EDSITEMENT

SEARCH SUBJECT CATALOGUE WEBSITES LESSON PLANS REFERENCE SHELF TEACHERS' LOUNGE ABOUT EDSITEMENT

The Statue of Liberty
The Meaning and Use of a National Symbol



"We will not forget that Liberty has here made her home;
nor shall her chosen altar be neglected."

— President Grover Cleveland accepting the Statue of Liberty
on behalf of the U.S., October 28th, 1886

Home

Lesson Plans

SEARCH

DISCLAIMER

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- SUBJECT AREAS ▶**
- Literature: Poetry
 - Art: Visual Arts
 - History: US History
 - History: US: Civics and U.S. Government
- GRADE LEVELS ▶**
- 3-5
- TIME REQUIRED ▶**
- Lesson 1:** interactive activity online or mini-lesson
 - Lesson 2:** 1 class period
 - Lesson 3:** 1 class period
 - Lesson 4:** 1 class period
 - Lesson 5:** 1 class period
 - Lesson 6:** 1 class period to introduce the project, additional time as required for work on posters and improve reproduction quality.

How was the Statue of Liberty designed to be a symbol? How have circumstances enhanced its meaning? Help clarify the nature of symbols for your students as they study the Statue of Liberty, complete research on a national symbol, and use their research to communicate a message of their own.

Learning Objectives

After completing the lessons in this unit, students will be able to:

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- Identify symbols used to depict Americans' shared values, principles and beliefs, and explain their meaning.
- List specific symbols in the design of the Statue of Liberty.
- Use a symbol to communicate an idea.

Guiding Questions: What is a symbol? What are some of our national symbols? How do specific meanings get attached to a symbol? How can a symbol be used to communicate an idea?

Skills ▶

Preparing to Teach This Lesson

- Review the [lessons in this unit](#) and select archival materials to use for your classroom discussions. Bookmark them, if practical; download and print out the selected documents and duplicate copies as necessary for student viewing.
- Obtain information on the many symbols built in to the Statue of Liberty through an interactive activity on [The National Park Service website](#), a link from the EDSITEMent resource [The Internet Public Library](#).
- Gather the necessary materials for the poster-making project in [Lesson 6](#). If your school has an art teacher, consult with her/him about poster making. The poster project can be directed by the art teacher, if you prefer.
- The [Digital Classroom National Archives and Records Administration](#), available through EDSITEMent, offers a series of [worksheets for analyzing primary source documents](#), including written documents and photographs, that you may wish to use or adapt to help students in reviewing the materials presented in this unit.

- STANDARDS ALIGNMENT ▶**
- [NCTE/IRA List of Standards for the English Language Arts](#)
1. Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world ([more](#))

Suggested Activities

[Lesson 1: Isn't It Symbolic?](#)

[Lesson 2: A Mighty Woman with a Torch](#)

[Lesson 3: Built-In Symbols](#)

[Lesson 4: Using the Symbol](#)

[Lesson 5: Choose a Symbol, Any Symbol](#)

[Lesson 6: Create a Symbol](#)

[Lesson 7: The United States Symbol](#)

[Extending the Lesson](#)

Lesson 1

Isn't It Symbolic?

As a class, review what a symbol is and identify examples of symbols in the classroom. Explain to students that a symbol brings to mind an idea. Over the years, a symbol tends to take on a meaning related to its history, function or appearance. For example, Bartholdi, the designer of the Statue of Liberty, knew that for most people chains represent tyranny; likewise, a broken chain symbolizes freedom. These associations were built in to the Statue during its creation.

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National Standards for Arts Education

2. Using knowledge of structures and functions
3. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

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Ideas can also be gradually transferred to an object over time. In this way, an object can take on new, sometimes unintended meanings. As millions of immigrants found themselves welcomed to America by the Statue of Liberty, it became associated with their struggle for freedom and desire for a better life. In 1989, Chinese students demonstrating in Tiananmen Square made a model of the Statue of Liberty to symbolize their revolution. When you see the Statue of Liberty, you may simply see one of the largest statues ever built, or you may associate it with universal qualities of freedom or democracy, or you may have personal feelings about it based on your own experiences.

If possible, give students the opportunity to explore an interactive lesson on symbols, available on the EDSITEMent-reviewed website The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Explore and Learn. If access to technology is limited, adapt the lesson for direct instruction by downloading and duplicating the image of one or both statues; then use the museum activity as a guide to your discussion.

Larger images of the statues referenced in this lesson are also available:

- Wooden statue of Fudô Myô-ô
- Mali: Statue of Mother and Child

LESSON 2

A Mighty Woman with a Torch

Have students brainstorm what they already know about the Statue of Liberty. Write all ideas on the chalkboard or a large piece of paper. With the brainstromed ideas displayed, encourage further discussion with these questions:

- Why does the statue face away from the U.S. if it is a symbol of liberty? (Note: The statue faces France as a symbol of the enduring friendship between the two countries. This positioning was fortuitous because the statue was subsequently viewed by more than 12 million immigrants as they entered the U.S., making it one of the first things they saw in America.)

- What do people use torches for? What does the torch make you think about the statue?
- Who uses a crown? What does the crown make you think about the statue?
- How does the tremendous size of the statue affect the way you feel about it?
- Why are so many people familiar with the Statue of Liberty? Why are so many people aware of what it represents?

Kid-friendly background information on the Statue of Liberty is available on America's Library, via a link from the EDSITEMent resource American Memory, and on Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids and The National Park Service, two links from the EDSITEMent resource The Internet Public Library.

LESSON 3

Built-In Symbols

The class is now ready to take a detailed look at the Statue, beginning with its symbol-packed design. Divide the class into five groups. Have each group look closely at one of the following images of the statue from the EDSTEMent resource [American Memory](#) and record the details each group member observes:

- [Profile view of left-side of head, May 1984](#)
- [Detail view of flame looking southwest showing colored-glass alteration, May 1984](#)
- [Broken shackles, axe head and right foot at base, May 1984](#)
- [Charlie De Leo performing scale fruitions alongside the left foot](#)
- [Statues and sculpture, Statue of Liberty II](#)

Have each group share its photo and observations. What details about the Statue did the students note that were not mentioned during the brainstorming session in [Lesson 2](#)? The tablet, axe, broken chains, seven rays in the crown, 25 windows? Hypothesize about their meaning.

LESSON 4

Using the Symbol

Now your students will look at some examples of how the Statue of Liberty has been used for its symbolism. As a class, analyze one or all of the archival materials listed below. (Note: The first item, Emma Lazarus's famous poem, "The New Colossus," contains difficult language that will probably require teacher direction; the remaining items are digital images of photographs, posters and song sheets.) As students review the items, they should ask: Why did the creator choose to use the Statue of Liberty as a symbol? What message does the Statue of Liberty communicate in each instance?

Poetry

- [The New Colossus](#), available from the EDSTEMent resource [American Verse Project](#). Written by Emma Lazarus in 1883 as a fundraiser for the Bartholdi Pedestal Fund, the poem is inscribed on a bronze plaque that was placed on the interior wall of the pedestal in 1903. Concentrate on elements of the statue the class has discussed that are mentioned in the poem (e.g., torch, size, location in the harbor). What does the poet emphasize about the statue? Why do students think this poem was inscribed on the pedestal of the statue?

Sheet Music

- [Liberty 1916](#) Both the cover sheet and the lyrics are of interest. What does the songwriter say liberty is? In 1916, there was a war going on in Europe. Do you think the songwriter would have been in favor of having the U.S. enter the war?
- [When you come back: and you will come back, there's the whole world waiting for you; March song 1918](#) Of special interest is the cover sheet with songwriter George M. Cohan's picture flanked by images of the Statue of Liberty and the Capitol. Why did Cohan, a very famous entertainer of his day, place his picture on the cover between the two symbols? Why did he choose the Statue of Liberty for the cover of this song

written for soldiers going off to fight in World War I?

Posters

- Freedom of expression, of religion, from want, from fear everywhere in the world (1941), available on the EDSITEMent resource [American Memory](#)
Is the Statue of Liberty in the poster? The freedoms mentioned come from a famous speech delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. According to the poster, how will people everywhere in the world achieve these freedoms?
- Liberty for all: Keep 'em flying (circa 1942), available on the EDSITEMent resource [American Memory](#).
Why did the artist choose to juxtapose the Statue of Liberty and an aircraft carrier? What is the message? What do you think was going on in our country at that time?

Photos

- "Human Statue of Liberty. 18,000 Officers and Men at Camp Dodge, Des Moines, Iowa. Colonel William Newman, Commanding. Colonel Rush S. Wells, Directing. Mole & Thomas. (NWDNS-165-WW-521B(1) 09/1918." (Locate the image by searching for the terms "Human" and "Statue" in [NAIL](#) on the EDSITEMent resource [The Digital Classroom](#).)
This 1918 photo depicts a "human statue of liberty" composed of 18,000 officers and men at Camp Dodge in Des Moines, Iowa. This is an interesting picture, but why was this chosen as an activity for troops training for World War I?
- "The announcing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, was the occasion for a monster celebration in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Thousands massed on all sides of a replica of the Statue of Liberty on Broad Street, and cheered unceasingly. Philadelphia Public Ledger." (Locate the image by searching for the terms "replica" and "Statue of Liberty" in [NAIL](#) on the EDSITEMent resource [The Digital Classroom](#).) Why celebrate the end of World War I with this Statue?
- "Liberty Enlightening the World (circa 1920)" (Locate the image by searching for the exact phrase "Liberty Enlightening the World" on the EDSITEMent resource [American Memory](#).)
From what vantage point does the photograph appear to have been taken? Why did the photographer frame the photo with the window? Who else got to see the Statue of Liberty this way? What is the message of the photo?
- Locate the following photos in the [NAIL Standard Search](#) on the EDSITEMent resource [The Digital Classroom](#) by searching for the exact titles:
 - "Trash covers dumping area designated as a future park (Liberty State Park). Statue of Liberty appears in background."
 - "A view of the Statue of Liberty seldom seen by tourists-trash-littered dumping ground is proposed Liberty State Park."
 - "Oil slick surrounds the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor."

What message does each photograph send? How does the image of the Statue of Liberty in each picture help the photographer get across that message?

LESSON 5

Choose a Symbol, Any Symbol

In this lesson, students will work in small groups to research another familiar symbol of the U.S. Their goal is to understand the history of the symbol and to gain an appreciation for its significance. Have each group choose a symbol (some examples are listed below) and locate information about it online or in the library. To get started, students can peruse the following resources available through EDSITEMENT. All are general in nature and searchable, except for The Internet Public Library, which is organized as a directory.

- [American Memory Project Library of Congress](#)
- [The Digital Classroom](#)
- [History Matters](#)
- [The Internet Public Library](#)

Here are some sources of information on specific symbols—most designed for young people—available through EDSITEMENT:

The Alamo

Link from American Memory

- [Remember the Alamo](#)

American Flag

Links from American Memory

- [Flag Day](#)
- [History of the Flag](#)

Links from The Internet Public Library

- [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids](#)
- [Celebrating America's Freedoms](#)
- [Fort McHenry](#)
- [The Star-Spangled Banner](#)

Bald Eagle

Links from The Internet Public Library

- [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids](#)
- [Celebrating America's Freedoms](#)

Empire State Building

Link from American Memory

- Empire State Building

Liberty Bell

Links from The Internet Public Library

- Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids
- The Liberty Bell Homepage

Taps

Link from The Internet Public Library

- Celebrating America's Freedoms

Uncle Sam

Links from The Internet Public Library

- Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids
- Information and images of Uncle Sam (and John Bull) (Background information)

Link from American Memory

- Uncle Sam Recruiting Poster (Background information)

LESSON 6

Create a Symbol

Continuing to work in small groups, students will now create a poster that conveys a message using the national symbol they researched in Lesson 5. Each group will share its poster, clarifying its message and the reason behind the choice of symbol and design. In preparing to create their posters, the students should become familiar with some of the design principles illustrated by the following posters:

- Freedom of expression, from want, from fear everywhere in the world (1941)
- Liberty for all: Keep 'em flying (1943)

Point out such design features as:

1. a limited amount of words
2. a few large images
3. one color used for words that go together
4. even lettering in straight lines
5. a limited number of colors used
6. particular use of the national symbol

Using a rubric designed with your students' skill level, class curriculum, and specific goals for this assignment in mind will help your students understand what is expected of them and how they will be evaluated. The following is a sample rubric you may wish to use when designing your own. This rubric is designed to demonstrate the kinds of standards by which one teacher might evaluate posters and presentations; it is not intended to set a universal standard for what makes a good poster. Review your particular standards in class before students begin working on their posters.

NOTE: Exemplary posters will include all of the positive qualities of very good and satisfactory posters.

[Click here](#) to download the rubric in rich-text format.

Name: _____	Exemplary	Very Good	Satisfactory	Needs Revision
Date: _____				
Design Does the poster feature:				
• limited use of words?	Uses words to great effect.	Effort has been made to say the most with the fewest words.	Number of words is satisfactory.	Too many words.
• thoughtful use of images?	One or very few images work with the words to communicate the message.	Effort has been made in selection, creation and placement of images.	Use of images is satisfactory.	Too many images or images are too small.
• a limited number of colors?	Color choice helps to communicate the message.	Selection of colors reflects an effort to create an effective overall design.	Number of colors is satisfactory.	Too many colors.
• thoughtful use of color?	Use of color complements the overall design.	Use of color reflects an effort to create an effective overall design.	Use of color does not distract the viewer.	Use of color distracts from message.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an overall design? 	<p>Content Does the poster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate a message? 	<p>Overall design creates beauty and helps emphasize the message.</p>	<p>Overall design is effective.</p>	<p>Effort has been made in overall design.</p>	<p>No apparent design principle.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect the symbol with the poster's message? 	<p>The message is particularly effective in tandem with the symbol.</p>	<p>Message is effective.</p>	<p>Message is clear.</p>	<p>Message is unclear.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect the symbol with the poster's message? 	<p>The symbol works with the overall design to communicate the message.</p>	<p>Choice of symbol is especially appropriate to the message.</p>	<p>Connection between the symbol and the message is clear.</p>	<p>Connection between the symbol and the message is unclear.</p>
	<p>Appearance Does the poster feature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • even lettering in straight lines? 	<p>Lettering contributes to overall effectiveness of poster.</p>	<p>Letters are generally even in size and placed in straight lines.</p>	<p>Effort has been made to make even letters in straight lines.</p>	<p>Lettering distracts the viewer.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paper kept in good condition? 	<p>Poster is pristine.</p>	<p>Condition of the paper is excellent.</p>	<p>Condition of the paper does not detract from the poster.</p>	<p>Condition of the paper detracts from the poster.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lettering that is effectively sized? 	<p>Choice of letter size reflects thought put into overall design.</p>	<p>Letter size allows a good balance between words and image.</p>	<p>Lettering can be easily read, yet does not distract from the image.</p>	<p>Lettering too small or too large.</p>
	<p>Explanation Did the group explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the history and meaning of the symbol? 			<p>Explanation reflects good research of the symbol.</p>	<p>Explanation could not be understood or did not relate to the symbol.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> their use of the symbol in the poster? 	<p>Explanation of the symbol enhances the viewer's understanding of the poster.</p>	<p>Clear explanation of why this symbol was chosen.</p>	<p>Group did explain their use of the symbol.</p>	<p>Explanation could not be understood or did not relate to the symbol.</p>
	<p>Comments:</p>			

Overall Rating:

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets All or Most Expectations
- Meets Adequate Expectations
- Needs Revision

LESSON 7

The United States Symbol

As a culminating activity, assess students' understanding of symbols and their use in depicting Americans' shared values, principles and beliefs with a brief writing assignment. Ask students to list some American symbols and what they represent. Then, have students select a symbol that they believe to be the symbol of the U.S. and explain their choice.

As a follow-up to this lesson, ask students to make note of any movies, books, magazines, documentaries, etc., they see that include some reference to the Statue of Liberty (or any other symbol discussed in the lesson). Have them explain to the class the feelings the reference intended to conjure.

Extending the Lesson

- Students interested in the construction of the Statue of Liberty should be fascinated by the 230 photos available through the EDSITEMENT resource American Memory's Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record. These pictures reveal the interior structure of the statue and the restoration that was completed in 1986.
- Emma Lazarus's poem "The New Colossus," alludes to the Colossus of Rhodes. Lazarus's allusion to the ancient wonder adds information to the poem, which begins by telling the reader that although the statues are similar (almost exactly the same height, for example), there are important differences. In this way, Lazarus transfers ideas one associates with the Colossus of Rhodes to the Statue of Liberty. Students might be interested in learning more about the Colossus of Rhodes and sharing with the class the ways in which it compares with and contrasts from the Statue of Liberty.
- If your school has a music teacher, he or she may be able to help the students learn one of the songs from the sheet music in Lesson 4. The EDSITEMENT resource American Memory contains a searchable collection of

many digitized versions of sheet music from various periods.

- Students may be interested in learning more about the creation of the Statue of Liberty. Both the initial construction and restoration of the Statue of Liberty involved public fundraising. One significant chapter in the history of the Statue was the difficulty experienced in raising funds for the American commitment to build the pedestal. Though the statue was intended to be dedicated in 1876 to celebrate the Centennial, its dedication was delayed, partially because of a lack of funds. The newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer is credited with using the power of the press to motivate the American public.

On the EDSITEMent resource [American Memory](#), students can read about one fundraiser in which small replicas of the statue were sold for a dollar. Search by title for "The Great Statue of Liberty and the Pedestal Fund. [Manufacturer and builder / Volume 17, Issue 6, June 1885]." Students can also read a contemporary account of the dedication ceremony by searching for "The Nineteenth Century in Print: Periodicals: The Inauguration of Bartholdi's Liberty Statue. [Manufacturer and builder / Volume 18, Issue 11, November 1886]."

A detailed account of the statue's origins, as well as information about the centennial restoration of the statue and the many individuals associated with the Statue of Liberty are accessible through [The National Park Service](#) website, a link from the EDSITEMent resource [The Internet Public Library](#).

- Understanding the statue's history requires reviewing the history of the relationship between France and the U.S., beginning with the American Revolution. More information on this relationship can be found at [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids](#), a link from the EDSITEMent-reviewed website [The Internet Public Library](#).
- The Statue of Liberty is closely linked to the history of immigrants who entered America through Ellis Island, a fruitful topic for student research. The EDSITEMent resource [American Memory](#) features a lesson on immigration (with information for the teacher).

For more information on Ellis Island, visit these links from the EDSITEMent resource [The Internet Public Library](#):

- [Ellis Island](#)
- [National Park Service](#)

Students might also be interested in viewing and analyzing the film "An American Tail," which features an immigration storyline and images of the Statue of Liberty.

- Students with access to technology can search the websites listed below for examples of the use of other national symbols in photos and posters.

Links to EDSITEMent Participating Websites

American Memory
<http://memory.loc.gov/>
America's Library

<http://www.americaslibrary.gov/>

American Verse Project
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/english/amverse/>

The Digital Classroom National Archives and Records Administration
<http://www.nara.gov/education/>

History Matters
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/>

The Internet Public Library
<http://www.ipl.org>

Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids, Grades 3-5

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/index.html>

Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids, Grades K-2

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/symbols/ladyliberty.html>

Department of Veteran Affairs Home Page

<http://www.ya.gov/index.htm>

Celebrating America's Freedoms

<http://www.va.gov/pubaff/celebAm/CAIndex.htm>

The National Park Service Statue of Liberty Page

<http://www.nps.gov/stli/>

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Explore and Learn
<http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/index.asp>

Other Resources

Recommended readings from American Memory

- Brill, Marlene Targ. "Building the Capital City." N.Y.: Children's Press, 1996.
- D'Alelio, Jane. "I Know That Building!" Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1989.
- Fradin, Dennis Brindell. "From Sea to Shining Sea: Washington, D.C." Chicago: Children's Press, 1992.
- Lawlor, Veronica, ed. "I Was Dreaming to Come to America: Memories from the Ellis Island Oral History Project." N.Y.: Viking, 1995.
- Quiri, Patricia Ryon. "The White House." N.Y.: Franklin Watts, 1996.
- Reynolds, Patrick M. "A Cartoon History of the District of Columbia." Willow Street, Pa.: The Red Rose Studio, 1995.
- Sandler, Martin W. "Immigrants. A Library of Congress Book." N.Y.: HarperCollins, 1995.
- Schackburg, Richard. "Yankee Doodle." N.Y.: Half Moon Books, 1994.
- Spier, Peter. "The Star-Spangled Banner." N.Y.: Dell, 1973.
- Young, Robert. "A Personal Tour of Monticello." Minneapolis: Lerner, 1999.

Recommended reading from Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site, a link from The Internet Public Library

- Hesse, Karen. "Letters from Rifka." Reprint edition: Puffin, November 1993.



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